International Business Centre

The IBC-Organisation and Strategy 2020

Aalborg, June 2015
This IBC Strategy 2020 was discussed and adopted at the IBC-Staff Meeting, September 16, 2015.

It is a rolling strategy that will be discussed and adjusted annually at the IBC-Summer meeting, the first time at the Summer Meeting in June 2016.

Update, June 2016.

At the IBC-meeting in June 2016, the IBC-strategy 2020 was discussed and certain changes agreed upon. In addition, an Action Plan for 2016-2017 was discussed and agreed upon at the IBC-meeting in September 2016.

Major adjustments made in June 2016 are:

- The IB-Theme E-business has merged with the International Marketing Theme.
- Olav Jull Sørensen steps down as Head of IBC. He is replaced by Reimer Ivang.
- The three Senior Professors (Olav Jull Sørensen, John Kuada and Marin Marinov) will be assigned special IBC-development tasks.
- IBC will bi-annually (not annually) publish an IBC-book or special issue of a journal.
- IBC will apply for one externally funded research project annually.
- Research and publishing plans will be prepared annually, and publishing will aim at BFI-points.
Foreword

The International Business (IBC) at Aalborg University was established in 1984. From a modest start in terms of staff and students, IBC has grown to become a comprehensive Centre with three graduate programmes and an underpinning bachelor programme; a research programme with 15 research scholars and covering five themes within International Business; A doctoral programme with 12 PhD-students, and an extensive programme for collaboration with the local and international business community.

The educational programmes are all global in scope with recruitment from more than 20 countries. The educational programmes are attractive building on the AAU-brand of the Problem Based Learning with students working on problems from business reality and developing questions and answers from integrating theory and practice.

The field of International Business is broad in scope and the Centre has chosen to focus on five themes each with a small core staff and building on an extensive international network of scholars.

IBC has Problem Based Learning as the foundation for its activities. This implies the building of strong networks and collaborative links to the business community – both the local and the global one.

Today, the IBC is an integral part of the Department of Business and Management at Aalborg University. As a comprehensive Centre with many educational, research and business collaborative activities as well as ambitious staff-members, we continuously discuss the platform and the strategy for the future. The results of our discussions are presented in this document outlining our IBC-Strategy 2020. It is not a plan as such, but it indicates our ambitions and goals to be achieved as well as the direction and actual actions to be taken. It will be used as an agile management tool being reviewed and revised on a yearly basis to reflect the dynamics of the field and the business reality we are engaged with.

Olav Jull Sørensen

Head of the International Business Centre
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1. The International Business Centre – in brief.

The International Business Centre (IBC) was established in 1984 with the launch of the MSc degree programme in International Business. From a modest start with five students, the IBC has gradually grown and today the IBC is a **Comprehensive Centre** within the Department of Business and Management at Aalborg University standing on three pillars: (1) a research and a PhD-programme, (2) an Educational programme at master and bachelor level with global recruitment of students and solidly based on the principles of Problem Based Learning (PBL), and (3) an intensive collaboration programme and links to the local and global business community. Through the synergy from the interaction between the three pillars, IBC is a highly socially engaged center (Figure 1).

![Figure 1. The Socially Engaged University](image)

The developments of the IBC over the last five years are shown in Annex 1. In brief, for 10 indicators, IBC has developed as follows:

- From a core research staff of 6 in 2010 to 15 researchers in 2017
- From a total staff of 14 in 2010 to a total staff of 25 in 2017
- From 12 PhD-students in 2010 to 12 PhD students in 2017
- From 4 international Adjunct Professors in 2010 to 7 in 2017
- From two MSc programmes in *International Business and International Marketing* respectively in 2010 to three in 2015, the third programme being an MSc programme in Innovation Management in Beijing.
- From a student intake of 72 in 2010 on the two MSc-Programmes to an intake of 122 in 2016 and an expected intake of 150 in 2017 on three MSc. Programmes.
- From 31 VBN Publications in 2010 to 45 in 2014.
- From 8.8 BFI-points in 2010 to 33 BFI points in 2014.
- From comprehensive but unsystematic collaboration with the business community to the establishment of a Business Collaboration Office in 2015.
- From one large externally financed project in 2010 to two in 2017
**Mission**
The IBC-mission is four fold: To provide outstanding quality teaching using the Problem Based Learning (PBL) pedagogy; To graduate highly qualified candidates for management and expert positions; To contribute to the body of knowledge on international business with new conceptual perspectives, theoretical constructs (theory building) and empirical insights (practice building), and to nurture strong collaborative relations with private and public sectors.

**Vision**
The IBC vision is to strengthen our international position and become an internationally visible and recognized Centre that constructively contributes to the teaching, research and policy/strategy agendas in the area of international business.

**Overall strategy**
The overall IBC-strategy is to further develop our Comprehensive Centre by globally exploring, balancing, and exploiting the synergies between research, problem-based education, and multiple facetted collaboration with the business community.

The strategy for the core fields of IBC is elaborated below, but in brief and in more concrete terms, by 2020, the overall strategy is expected to have developed the Centre as follows:

- Each of the six (by June 2016 reduced to five) recently defined research themes within IB has a minimum of three core staff; two PhDs and two Adjunct Professors.
- A new IB research theme within Corporate International Finance and Investment has been developed and launched
- The total number of researchers has increased from 13 to 18.
- The total number of PhD-projects has reached 14 PhDs enrolled at AAU
- The total number of intake on the MSc.programmes is expected to be 210.
- A new educational programme at AAU has been launched and IBC participates in one additional programme abroad.
- IBC has developed the capacity to annually apply for one large externally funded project and continuously run two-three larger externally funded projects.
- The IBC biannual International Conference has become an agenda setting conference within IB with high quality publishable papers.
- IBC participates regularly in the five most important international conferences within IB.
- IBC achieves annually a minimum of two BFI points per core researcher
- Through the newly established Business Collaboration Office, IBC develops and participates continuously in one larger international business development project and host annually 2-3 business development workshops and seminars.
2. The IBC-Research Platform.

Present Situation.
The International Business research field is broad in scope. IBC’s research agenda can be defined in terms of topics covered (topical scope), geographical coverage (geographical scope), and the nature of companies studied (company scope).

The topical scope of IBC was revised in 2014 and consists now of five research themes as follows:

* Internationalization of Companies and Global Strategies
* Culture, Inter-Cultural Management & Leadership
* International Marketing, E-business, Global Branding and Consumers
* Global Innovation, Knowledge Management and Organisation
* Global Industrial Dynamics and Value Chains in Institutional Context

See the IBC-Themes Flower on page 12-13 and in Annex 2 and Theme Descriptions in Annex 3.

Geographically, our research covers companies from developed, transition and emerging economies and in terms of company scope, both start-ups, small and medium sized companies and MNCs and their interplay are part of the research agenda and projects with a tendency to focus more on internationalization issues of SMEs.

Methodological considerations and collaboration with the business community are important issues across the five themes.

Plans for 2015-20
The IBC-research platform was updated and revised in the autumn of 2014 and the planning period 2015-20 will be used to grow the six newly defined IB-research themes.

The growth path for each of the five themes is related to both solid state-of-the-art research but more so to pursue research beyond mainstream thinking by challenging the present paradigms.

While each sub-theme has to define a growth path of its own, the five growth themes are not seen as islands. Most projects – especially larger externally funded projects – will have scholars from two or more of the sub-themes. This cross-themes collaboration is essential to capture the complexity of the present global economy.

As part of the growth strategy for the individual themes, larger externally funded research projects will be identified. Two projects will be formulated and applied for in 2016/2017. (See Funding in section 9 below). In terms of geographical scope, IBC will continue to have a minimum of one research project in conjunction with the local/regional business community. These projects are often combined with company development projects as well as student projects for local companies. For collaboration with the business community, see section 8.
The company scope will remain both MNE and SME oriented with a tendency to have more SME-projects due to the fact that the region and Denmark in general have many international SMEs as have emerging economies.

In more concrete terms, by 2020 the following goals are for both individual researchers and IBC as such expected to have been achieved:

1. Five research themes fully developed in terms of staff (minimum three for each theme), PhD-projects (minimum two), international networks, and publications (for details, see various sections below)
2. One additional theme in Corporate International Finance and Investment has been launched and developed.
3. An annual planning methodology and scheme is developed and used for individual researchers, the themes and IBC in general.

3. Educational Programmes

Present Situation
The international educational programmes have been and will remain to be a cornerstone for IBC. Students provide a solid base for a core staff needed for teaching; students are outlets for research results; students, through projects and internships, collaborate and solve problems for companies and are important as liaison to the business community, and students as managers and experts following graduation from an important collaborative network spanning the globe.

IBC is responsible for three educational programmes: MSc-in International Business (from 1984); MSc in International Marketing (from 2007) and MSc in Innovation Management in Beijing (from 2012). In addition, IBC is much engaged at the bachelor level both in the “old” Top-Up Programme (from 1991) and the new, English language based 3-years BSc-programme in Economics and Business Administration (from 2012). The five programmes are conducted in English and the students are recruited globally from more than 20 countries. The total intake for these educations was 222 in September 2014, 230 in September 2015 and xxx in 2016. The total stock of students in 2015 and 2016 on the programmes is 456 students and 482 respectively. (See Table 1) The educational programmes are under the Study Board for Economics and Business Administration

The International Business and International Marketing programme have reached an annual intake of around 100 students while the top-up programme is stable around 40-50 students. The Innovation Management programme in Beijing is stable around 30 students. The new bachelor degree is still growing. The intake in 2016 was 80.

The educational programmes under the wings of IBC are all based on the PBL-pedagogy with a focus on solid academic skills and capabilities to integrate theory and practice.
Table 1: Student Intake 2012-2016 and Teaching Hours for 2016/17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Total Stock Sept. 2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>Total Stock Sept. 2016</th>
<th>Norm (hours per student/Semester)</th>
<th>Total no of Required Teaching Hours 2016/2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IBE</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSc-Top-up</td>
<td>36(11)*</td>
<td>39(10)</td>
<td>43(9)</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>36(15)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.836</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSc-Full Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation (Beijing)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>482</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of full-time staff (Average 900 hours)***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total: 18,5/11.5***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Indicates the number of guest students; **Excluding BSC-full-time and guest students; ***Professors/Associate Professors: 984 hours; Assistant Professors: 820 hours, per year

Table 1 shows the required teaching (working) hours for the educational programmes where IBC-staff-members are mostly involved. The hours are calculated on the basis of the number of students and the norms per semester per student allocated to each programme. The table shows that there were 10.194 teaching hours allocated to teach the IBE/IM and top-up programmes in the academic year 2016/17 corresponding to 11-12 full-time staff-members.

Table 2: Teaching Hours for the IBE & IM Programmes and Staff Ratio, Academic Year 2014/15*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of hours used</td>
<td>7.422,25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of hours used by permanent staff</td>
<td>6.254,25</td>
<td>84,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of hours used by D-VIP and PhD</td>
<td>1.168,00</td>
<td>15,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBC-ratio of teaching used by permanent staff</td>
<td>6.074,00</td>
<td>81,8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Calculated of the basis of the IBE & IM Accounts for the IBE & IM Programmes

The ratio of teaching hours by permanent staff to the total number of teaching hours is considered an important measure for the degree of research based teaching and thus the quality of teaching. Table 2 shows that for the IBE and IM-programmes in the academic year 2014/2015 the ratio is 84,3 %. For IBC-staff alone the ratio is 81,8 %. For details see annex 9.
Table 3 shows the obligatory working hours for the IBC-staff-members, using the rate of 1924 hours for a one year full time position. Table 3 is based on 10, 5 full time employed permanent staff members who have been employed for the whole period of the Academic Year 2014/15. Totally, for the academic year 2014/15 the core staff of IBC had 20.202 working hours to account for. In the academic year 2014/15 most hours were allocated to the three focal IBC-programmes (34,5 %), but IBC also contributed many hours to the EBA-programme (5,5 %). PhD-supervision took up 1,9%. In 2014/15, IBC-staff had 602 hours (3 %) in “frikøb” from teaching obligations.

Table 3. IBC-Staff Members Working Hours Distributed on Educational Programmes, Research and other Activities, 2014/15. (See annex 10 for details)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Norms</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working Hours</td>
<td>20.202</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Hours</td>
<td>9.512</td>
<td>47,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actual</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBE-IM</td>
<td>5.989</td>
<td>29,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBA + Top-up</td>
<td>1.101</td>
<td>5,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM (Beijing)</td>
<td>974</td>
<td>4,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1.302</td>
<td>6,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD-Supervision</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>1,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects (Frikøb)</td>
<td>602</td>
<td>3,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committees, Etc.</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>0,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>9.536</td>
<td>47,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plans for 2015-20**
This section deals only with educational programmes and not with teaching staff. For staff plans, see section 4.

The two MSc. Programmes in International Business and International Marketing have been revised in the autumn of 2014 and the revisions will be implemented as from the academic year 2016/17. To give the two programmes both a sharper and deeper profile, the revised programmes are based on more programme specific modules and a few electives that make it possible for students to gain from both programmes. The MSc-programme in Innovation Management under the Sino-Danish Center (SDC), Beijing was revised in 2014 with the purpose to sharpen its profile.

Within the planning period, IBC will develop and launch one new MSc-programme within an area to be decided upon. One option under consideration is a programme in International E-Business.

In addition, we will annually undertake minimum one PBL-experiment. For 2015/16, one experiment on a better utilization of the many projects prepared by students has been approved and funded by the Dean’s Fund for PBL Development. For 2016/2017, IBC in conjunction with others will apply for Dkk 200.000,- from a new PBL-strategic fund.
Research Profile of the International Business Center
Department of Business & Management, Aalborg University.
To strengthen the global recruitment, a more interactive IBC web-page will be developed and more focused country strategies will be applied to be able to recruit high level students. Furthermore, the AAU-scholarships for waivering the tuition fee will be used more pro-actively to recruit the best students outside the EU-frame. Within the planning period and based on the revised programmes, more focus on recruiting Danish students will take place.

By 2020, it is expected that a minimum of 150 students will be enrolled in the IBE and IM programmes together. Additionally 30 students are expected to be enrolled in the Innovation Management in China and 25 students to be enrolled in the new MSc. that is to be launched.

4. IBC-Staff

Present Situation.
The development from 2010 to 2015 of all categories of staff associated to IBC is shown in Annex 4a. As shown in Annex 4b, by Mid-June, 2015, IBC had 13 full time researchers and two part time professors with roots in nine different countries. In addition, we have one professor emeritus and seven adjunct professors from USA, UK, and Slovenia respectively. IBC has also five part-time teachers who have been with the Centre for many years with some being engaged in the IBC activities beyond teaching. The IBC has four full time administrative staffs, with three for education (study secretary) and one for research.

In 2015, IBC announced one assistant professorship in Innovation Management and in Spring 2016 IBC announced one assistant professorship in International Marketing and Digital Marketing; one PhD-position in International Marketing and two professorships in International Business.

Furthermore, to strengthen the collaboration with the business community, an International Business Collaboration Office with one officer was established in 2015 (established as from April 2015).

Plans for 2015-20
For the planning period, 2015-20, the IBC goal and plan is to recruit staff-members so that each of the five IBC-themes has as a minimum of three permanent staff-members; two PhDs and two Adjunct Professors. Additional staff will depend on student-intake as well as research programmes.

The IBC-core staff, will be augmented by enhancing our international collaborative network by attaching and collaborating with a selected number of internationally well positioned adjunct professors, but only to the extent that we can include them in actual scholarly activities.

From 2016-20, IBC plan to announce:

* One professorship as replacement
* Six associate professorships as part of career development
* Five assistant professorships as new positions

For 2016/ 2017 the announcements of new positions as associate professors are conditional and depend on the department budget and the need for teaching hours within specific fields.
Reflecting the importance of business collaboration related to research and teaching, we plan to employ one additional Business Collaboration Officer by 2020.

Given fluctuations in the recruitment and the fact that the international business field is broad in scope, IBC will continue to have part-time teachers, but similarly to the adjunct professors, they will, to the extent their other duties allow, be integrated into curriculum discussions and invited to participate in research seminars.

On the administrative side, the plan in 2016 is to additionally recruit $\frac{1}{2}$-1 study/research secretary, reflecting the increase in research and teaching and the integration of the Innovation Management programme into the IBC-Secretariat. The development of the administrative side will be coordinated with the ORCA-Research group.

## 5. IBC-Research Publications.

### Present Situation

Publishing is important for academic/promotional reasons and also for financial reasons as the department funding depends on the BFI-points produced.

The IBC-group is rather productive in terms of publications as they are registered in VBN. Table 4 shows the total BFI-points and the total of VBN-publications. Looking at the publishing for individual IBC-researchers, the spread in productivity is wide – also when calculated into BFI-points. IBC has no so-called “zero- researchers” among the staff-members. However, we have only a few publications in so-called 3-BFI points’ journals.

### Table 4. BFI-Points and VBN-Publications, 2010-15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>BFI-Points</th>
<th>VBN-Publications</th>
<th>No. of Researchers *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>33.29</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>31.27</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Professors, Associate Professors, and Assistant Professors.

According to the AAU-budget principles up to the end of 2015, it is important to obtain BFI-points as this secures a share of the so-called basic research funding (30% of the salary) and support funding (15%). Assistant professors receive funding without producing BFI-points. However, assistant professors need to publish as they have to compete for an associate professorship.

To support publishing, IBC has appointed a Publishing Coordinator.

### Plans for 2015-20

From 2016, AAU will adopt a new set of budgetary principles, where the financial incentives to publish (obtain BFI-points) are reduced compared to the present principles. However, publishing is still highly important both for the individual to be promoted and for an ambitious Centre for positioning in the academic community and the business environment.
Thus, it is essential that IBC continues to have no “zero-researchers”; that senior researchers obtain BFI points every year, and that assistant professors also publish every year to prepare for the associate professorship.

IBC aims at generating an increasing number of BFI-points reaching on average two points per core researchers, i.e. a total of 36-40 points by 2020 (from the 2013-level of 26 points). This goal will be achieved through the following publishing support activities:

- Each researcher prepares annually a research and publishing plan and for the coming three years a pipeline of projects/papers with papers at different stages from idea to publishing (research publishing portfolio). The plan for the coming year will be discussed at the IBC-Summer meeting.
- Editors for six core journals for IB are identified and worked with.
- IBC publish bi-annually an IBC-International Business Book or special issue of a journal
- Publishing is supported by presentation and discussion at the monthly IBC-research seminar and by attaching a colleague to support in the writing phase.
- Co-writing with colleagues, across IB-themes and with PhD-students and our adjunct professors is to be encouraged through common projects.
- An IBC Publishing Coordinator is appointed to support the publishing plans of all IBC researchers.

For publishing related to the collaboration with the business community, see section 8.

### 6. IBC Conferences, Workshops and Networks

**Present Situation**

In 2014, as part of its 30 Years Anniversary, IBC hosted its 5th International Conference on International Business with 75 participants and in June 2016, IBC hosted the 6th International Conference with 66 participants. The international conference hosted by IBC is a biannual event. These conferences are medium sized and aim at intensive debates with our many colleagues and partners from around the world. A PhD-course is an integral part of the periodic conferences. At the PhD-course in 2016 16 PhD-students participated.

Workshops, seminars and other research or business collaboration activities are hosted occasionally and not used systematically to boost research and promote links to the business community.

Individual researchers are member of various academic associations/conferences and a list of major partners/networks/associations/societies is shown in Annex 5. These memberships are often individually based and rather few are used systematically as an IBC-platform.

**Plans for 2015-2020**

The IBC-international conferences will continue with the 7th International Conference being hosted in June 2018 (and one in 2020). The conference will remain a medium-sized conference with focus on academic debates and with a PhD-course alongside the Conference. The publishing potential of the conferences will be strengthened in the coming years through cultivating editors of journals and/or, as in 2014, develop the proceedings from the conference into books.
The use of workshops will be strengthened providing the research themes with a platform for meeting with associated adjunct professors, other colleagues from outside the Center and the business community to discuss research findings, research projects etc. Annually, a minimum of two workshops will be hosted.

The monthly IBC-research seminars will continue forming a platform for presenting completed papers, new ideas, interplay with guest researchers, platform for PhD-students to present their ideas and findings, etc.

For research culture, see section 10.

7. Ph.D. and Post-Doc-Programme

Present Situation
The IBC PhD programme (under the Doctoral School of the Social Science Faculty) is an integral part of the IBC mission and research strategy. It is also an important recruitment base for future faculty positions.

In the recent years, IBC enrolled a relatively high number of PhDs due to accommodating co-financing terms by the Faculty for Social Sciences combined with an incentives package consisting of a lump sum to the Department when enrolling and graduating a PhD-student. At its highest, IBC hosted 17 PhDs in 2013. (See annex 4a)

By mid-2016, 12 PhDs and mid-2017 12 PhDs respectively were attached to IBC at various stages of the three years. See Annex 7. Most PhD-positions are externally financed or co-financed between the Department and an external sponsor. External sponsors are the industry, Danida, SDC, and foreign governments. Typically, the Department finances the tuition fee (DKK 325.000).

The PhDs come from many countries, including Denmark, China, Ghana, Tanzania and Germany.

IBC graduated one PhD in 2012 (Daniel); one in 2013 (Yimei), four in 2014 (Heather, Bob, Rana, and Andreea) and two in 2015. (Jimmi, Marisol). In 2016 three finished (Daojuan, Jonas and Felix). Seven of the PhD-students that finished since 2012 have been employed by the Center as Assistant Professors, and three have gone back to their university from which they were recruited as part of a capacity enhancement programme.

IBC together with foreign partners host one PhD-course on “theory building” and a PhD-course on “Contemporary theory and methodology of IB” as an integral part of the IBC bi-annual conferences. In addition, IBC through the SDC –Innovation Management Programme in Beijing co-host a PhD-course on Innovation under CICALICS and thus in conjunction with Tsinghua University, Zhejiang University and University of Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The individual PhD-student is supervised using the apprenticeship model. The diversity of the topics allow for very little formalization beyond the requirements laid down by the Doctoral School for Social Sciences.
**Plans for 2015-20**

IBC has enrolled two new PhD in 2017. There are very few possibilities for co-financing with the Department beyond the waiving of the tuition fee as the favorable incentives associated to enrolling/graduating a PhD-student come to a stop as from 2016. Thus, new PhDs must be financed from outside, for example, as Industrial PhDs, governmental programmes from abroad, or as part of larger research projects.

In 2017, one-two more PhD-positions will be announced.

**Action points and goals for the planning period are:**

1. Referring to the IB- research themes, by the end of 2020, researchers within the theme shall define PhD-projects; how to finance them and have established a minimum of two PhD-positions (i.e. minimum 10 PhD-students across the five research themes)
2. Assure that all senior researchers have a minimum of one PhD-student to supervise
3. Appoint an IBC-PhD-programme coordinator, who by 2020 has achieved the following goals:
   a. Established two PhD-courses within International Business that are offered annually
   b. Prepared a profile of the IBC-PhD-programme and students to inform about and promote IBC as a Centre with an excellent PhD-culture
   c. Arrange a minimum of two sessions for PhD-students annually.
   d. To identify international partners for PhD-collaboration (course collaboration; hosts for PhD-students, etc.)

It is important to stress that the PhD-Coordinator is responsible for tasks across the PhD-students while the supervisor is responsible for the PhD-project proper.

IBC will actively use the Post-Doc opportunity in the planning period. One Post-Doc position was obtained in 2016 and others will follow, especially by taking advantage of the new Individual Post-Doc arrangement which is similar to the Industrial PhD-scheme.

**8. Collaboration with the Business Community**

**Present Situation**

Given the fact that the IBC research and teaching build on the PBL-model and thus both explore and exploit new knowledge through theory-practice integration, the IBC’s collaborative interface with the business community is multi-dimensional, intensive and relates both to research, education and competence building. Some of the more important interfaces are:

Students: Internships globally; thesis and semester projects; cases, visits and guest speakers.
Research: Projects, interviews, co-writing
PhDs: Industrial PhDs and collaborative projects.
Competence: Intensive or longer courses and coaching mainly through GLOBAL
Debate: Collaborate to raise debates on a sound knowledge foundation (SMV-panel).

The collaborative activities are not simple add-on’s, but an integral part of the thinking of and activities within IBC.
IBC was engaged in one major collaborative project financed by the Regional Growth Forum: GLOBAL that ended in 2015. Another, SME-Panel project runs from 2015-2018.

**Plans for 2015-20**

The experiences from the company development project, GLOBAL as well as the SMV-panel indicate the need and possibility for building a more formal IBC-organisation for the collaboration with the business community. The key word for such a new collaborative set-up should be “pilot projects” or “development/competence building projects”, indicating that the activity within this new organisation is not pure research, neither is it a consultancy activity. Between these extremes, we have research findings and conceptualizations that are in need of development through being operationalized and tried out in practice. If successful, we have data for research and the “product” can be commercialized.

The envisioned “International Business Collaboration Forum” (IBCF) will be the third IBC-pillar (the two others being research and education), which works closely with the two other pillars at the same time as it has its own agenda. IBCF will have its own business collaboration manager (not a researcher) and will rise its own funding. Funding for three years for half position has been secured for the SME-Panel Project from Growth Forum, the regional business development organ. The SME-Panel project is headed by a small consortium of Aalborg University; SparNordBank, and the Law Firm Hjulmand & Kaptain.

As an integral and important part of the IBCF, the staff of IBCF will be responsible for annually to identify 100-150 companies in the region for student projects, internships etc. The Department and the Study Board for Business Studies will finance this part of IBCF.

The goal to be achieved by 2020 is that IBC has a fully developed and self/externally financed International Business Collaboration Forum (IBCF).

Key activities to be achieved are:

* The SME-Panel Project with a minimum of nine reports (within three years) on issues of importance for the development of the business community in the region.
* A new regional competence building project (replacing GLOBAL) as from 2016.
* An annual “International Business Forum” for debating the regions Global Position (in collaboration with partners)

While activities related to the “International Business Collaboration Forum” is an integral part of PBL and while most of the activities will be conducted by the Business Collaboration Manager, it is an activity that will require the permanent staff to use resources and hours on administration and participation in activities. Some of the activities will be financed by the collaboration projects. However, the publications produced within a business competence development project are of a different nature compared to research projects.

This leads to the following two action points for the Strategy 2015-20:

* Identify incentives and modes of acknowledgements of solid publication activity aiming at the business community.
* Identify ways in which teaching on competence enhancement programmes can be recognized as a part of our teaching obligations.
9. Funding of Research and Development Projects

Present Situation.
Presently, IBC has a portfolio of projects (see annex 6) funded by local, national and international funding agencies. Some of the projects aim directly at research; others aim at capacity building within universities or business with a potential for research (BSU, SME-Panel, and EUniAM); Others again have business development oriented funding (GLOBAL).

Previously, IBC had a few and well-funded projects around a relatively few researchers. However, the present portfolio is medium in terms of number and, with one exception, small in terms of funding. In addition, the portfolio is imbalanced in terms of research versus capacity building. The pipeline (projects already applied for) is presently very small.

In addition it should be added, that IBC has a set of solid research project that are based on very little or non-external funding such as SINET.

The pipeline of externally funded projects is shown in Annex 6. Given the increased number of IBC-researchers and the squeeze on internal funding for research (the 40% issue), IBC will more systematically apply for external funding of larger projects. In doing so, five considerations need to be taken into account:

* The portfolio of externally financed projects must be balanced with most projects focusing directly on research and with capacity building and business development enhancing projects being second and having a research potential.
* It is time consuming and costly to apply and manage large externally funded projects. The research potential need to be high and support for preparing the application relevant and good.
* The success rate is low (often around 10%). The project idea need to be solid and partners good.
* The overhead percentage need to be high. The projects need an overhead of min. 20% or, if lower, a guarantee of overhead financing is required.
* Balance the number of projects IBC leads vs. other projects in which IBC is a solid team member.

In 2016/17, IBC will apply for one-two larger projects to be externally financed by Danida (Research); by The Independent Research Council; by Obel Foundation (research), or by Regional Development Funds (development with research potential).

In the plan period, IBC will develop a capacity to run continuously one large externally financed projects, participate in two projects managed by partners and annually apply for two projects.

To achieve the goals, support from Department and others are essential in the following areas:

* Preparation of application (Funding and competent staff)
* Overhead support (funding).
10. Organisation of IBC

Present Situation
IBC has basically an informal structure and organizational culture with close relations between the staff and between staff, students and secretaries. Although the Centre has experienced relatively high growth rates both in terms of staff, PhDs and students, we still believe that the informality in our relationships remain a strength. However, we acknowledge the need to formalize certain tasks and share new responsibilities that arise with organizational growth. Furthermore, as our geographical outreach expands, we will need stronger coordination processes to ensure that we do not overlook the needs and concerns of any of our stakeholders – students, staff, companies and the community.

With this strategy document, IBC has adopted a more formal organization with the multiple tasks allocated to specific staff-members (See annex 8)

The aim is to assure that the many activities in a Comprehensive Centre with relatively low level of manpower are given the needed attention. The new mode of organising is based on the following principles:

* Main activities are developed and coordinated by two staff members (senior and junior) to assure diversity and thus new ideas, insure against no-show, and continuously undertake new experiments in teaching (PBL-development), in research (radical ideas) and in the collaboration with the business community.
* Young scholars, including PhDs take part in the coordination/development teams
* The tasks are shared relatively equally and with everybody having development tasks.
* New ideas of major impact are discussed and approved at the periodic IBC meetings.

Presently, in case of education, we work with general coordinators and semester/module coordinators; we hold a minimum of six staff meetings per year; we have bi-monthly Danish rolls meeting in the morning, and we have monthly research seminars. In addition, we have a biannual international conference.

The present mode of organising is shown in details in Annex 8. The coordination of some of the main tasks is shown below. The basis for the list is both what is important for IBC development and that we shall all take part in the growing of the Centre.

- Coordination of IBC: OJS/RI with reference to periodic staff meetings
- Coordination of Research Themes and their growth: SM + OJS
- Coordination of IBE/IM-educational programmes: RI + SM
- Coordination of Innovation Management, Beijing: DS + OJS
- Coordination of collaboration with the business community: KAC + RI
- Overall coordination of the PhD-programme: RVT+AIJ
- Coordination of External Project Identification and Application: RVT + MBR + OJS
- Coordination of thesis semester for BSc (top up/full time): RVT
- IBC Research Seminars: JK + AD
- Publishing Coordinator: JK
**Plans for 2015-20**

The basic organizational structure will remain the same. Two organizational changes will take place in 2016:

- Olav Jull Sørensen will leave the post as Head of IBC and Reimer Ivang will take over
- The three senior professors will be allocated specific and important IBC development tasks

IBC dynamics and culture are to be assured, among others, through:

1. IBC-staff meetings: Six per year (Summer, Christmas + 2 mid-term pr. semester): OJS
2. Danish Roles meetings: 2 times a month with times for celebration: Secretariat
3. IBC-Research Seminars: Last Friday in each month: JK + AD

**SPECIAL POINTS for the 2015-20 PLANNING PERIOD.**

11. **Improved Integration of IM (Beijing) into IBC**

**Present Situation**

With four years of pioneering work around the building the SDC-Innovation Management programme in China and between Denmark and China, the programme seems to be sustainable and gradually being institutionalized. It is therefore time to take stock and assess how SDC-IM can be further developed and how we more deeply can integrate the programme into Aalborg University and notable into the Department of Business and Management and IBC.

Basically the SDC-programs have three goals and focus areas:

* Building a Graduate program of Innovation Management with students from China and Denmark/Europe,

* Building a research program, including a PhD-programme within Innovation Management, and

* Building collaboration with the business community in China, the Danish as well as the Chinese business community.

As often in pioneering work, the pioneers are given some freedom to form the platform for the creation and development of the program – in this case SDC-IM. When the platform has proven to be solid enough, it is time to consider how it can be an integral part of the wider community, in this case AAU.

Presently, the following IBC-staff members are involved in the Innovation Management Programme in Beijing: Olav Jull Sørensen, Dmitrij Slepniov, Yimei Hu, Jimmi Normann Kristiansen and Jonas S. Eduardsen. From other Department units Birgitte Gregersen, Christian Nielsen, Morten Lund and Max Rolfstam are also on the teaching.
**Plans for 2015-20**

SDC-IM will be the host of CICALICS 2016 in August, including a PhD-course (4 days), An Innovation Workshop (2 days) and a Corporate Innovation Day (1 day)

It is found that the following areas can be of mutual benefit to SDC-IM and AAU:

1. The Department of Business and Management formally include SDC-IM into its organisation and procedures – with respect for the special rules and regulations that SDC and thus also SDC-IM are adhering to.
2. The Department forms an IM-Steering Committee of three (+ HEP and PI)\(^1\)
3. The Department identifies and approves of the HEP and PI
4. SDC-IM is under an SDC-IM Management Committee with DS as HEP; OJS as PI; YH as coordinator of semester plans for sem. 1 and 2, and with JNK taking care of recruitment of students in Denmark for the SDC-IM-programme.
5. The SDC-IM programme is formally hosted by the International Business Centre (IBC) where it will be developed alongside other IB-themes and the IBC is also hosting and responsible for the receiving of students and colleagues from SDC-China.
6. The HEP and PI are responsible for the integration and involvement of staff from different units of the Department and University at large.
7. SDC-IM prepares an annual plan and budget for its activities and the budget is approved by the IM-Management Committee and subsequently by the Head of Department.
8. The Study Secretariat for SDC-IM is integrated with the Study Secretariat for IM and IBE (SDC-IM pay for two months per year).

It is believed that with this integration and formalization of the SDC-IM programme in the Department of Business and Management, the SDC-IM programme has a platform for development and growing in the 2015-20 planning period.

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\(^1\) HEP: Head of Educational Programme
PI: Principal Investigator
12. Benchmarking IBC

Present Situation
IBC is presently not performing any systematic benchmarking.

Plan for 2015-20
IBC will investigate the pros/cons of developing a benchmarking platform. The work will be based on the following principles:

* The benchmarking must contribute to IBC-performance
* The benchmarking must contribute to profiling and promoting IBC
* The benchmarking shall focus on both similarities (areas where IBC performs better/ worse compared to others) and dissimilarities (areas where IBC is different from others)
* The benchmarking shall be low in terms of required resources.

The universities/departments/centers to use for benchmarking could be Copenhagen Business School or Aarhus Business School, DK; Thunderbird School of Global Management, USA; Kiel (IfW) and Uppsala University, Sweden.